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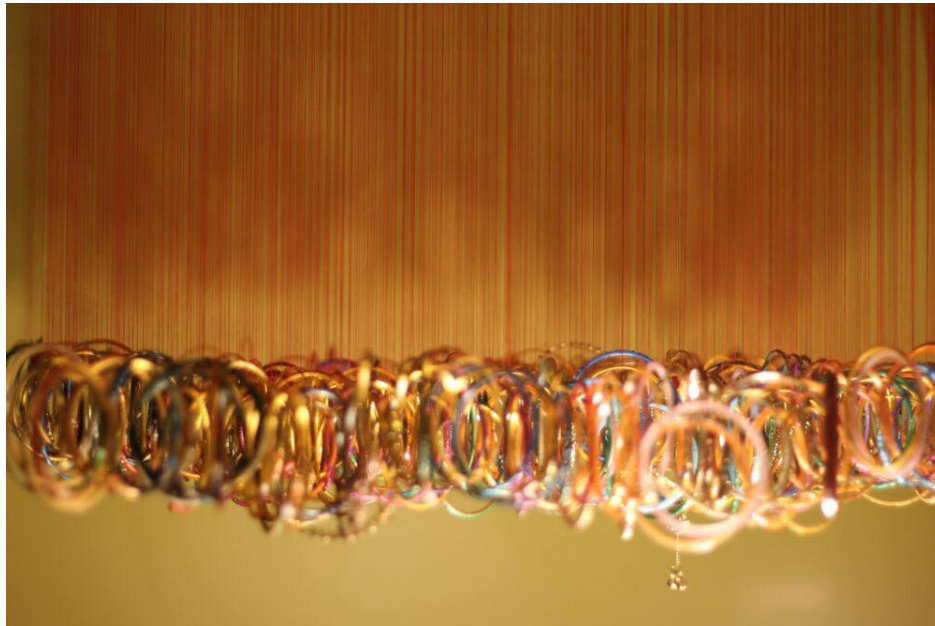


Contemporary Art
Museum St. Louis

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sukanya Mani explores issues of personal and collective safety in *Weight of Shadows*, opening September 9



Sukanya Mani, *The Bangle Project*, 2022. Donated bangles, monofilament, metal frame, and string. Courtesy the artist. Photo: Pratima Murali.

August 16, 2022 (St. Louis, MO) - The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (CAM) presents *Sukanya Mani: Weight of Shadows*, an exhibition presented by Teen Museum Studies. For the 2022 Teen Museum Studies program, high school participants were guided through a competitive application review process and chose St. Louis-based artist Sukanya Mani. Mani's exhibition draws upon her extensive work with domestic abuse survivors and her experiences as a South Asian immigrant to shed light on domestic abuse on a local and global scale. Her work serves as a vehicle to tell the stories of the survivors with whom she interacts. *Sukanya Mani: Weight of Shadows* will be on view in the Education Galleries at CAM from September 9, 2022 through February 12, 2023.

Mani's site-specific installations play with material and mark-making techniques to encourage viewers to examine issues of personal and collective safety. She transforms Tyvek®, watercolor paper, immigration documents and pamphlets for domestic abuse survivors into three-dimensional sculptures to signify hope and resilience. According to the artist, "I have used paper as a representation of legal safety. In the telling of stories within the domestic violence community, I found that having the right documents can often be the difference between freedom and continuing to live with abuse." She additionally draws upon her Indian heritage by joining donated bangles together to represent a promise between local women to create a safe space for survivors. Mani's artwork serves as a call

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to action for her audience to volunteer, donate, and educate themselves and their communities through local organizations.

Sukanya Mani (she/her) is a St. Louis-based, Indian-born interdisciplinary artist. Her work explores how creativity impacts space, often through the act of cutting. Operating between abstraction and representation, Mani's recent work involves cutting paper into patterns that fragment and unite the female body, rendering it both familiar and strange. Transforming the violent act of cutting into an act of creation is central to Mani's approach. In addition to her cut paper pieces, Mani's work also includes large-scale outdoor sculptural pieces and immersive, multi-part installations that highlight the relationship of individual elements to each other. Her work can be found nationally and has been given to both permanent and transient homes in the City of Poplar Bluff, Lee's Summit, Ballwin, Manchester, Chesterfield, Ellisville, and Brentwood.

Teen Museum Studies is a summer intensive internship that engages high school students in direct exposure to museum careers, develops collaboration and critical thinking skills, and offers the chance to select and work with a St. Louis-based artist to organize an exhibition that premieres at CAM in September. This immersive program provides avenues for artistic engagement beyond studio practice and hands-on experience working with artists, museum staff, and creative peers.

Sukanya Mani: Weight of Shadows is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by Ezra Birman, Olivia Bussmann, Finn Kanak, Ava Lamb, Sarah Reifschneider, Lear Rose, Lila Summers, Sanai Todd, Frankie Williams, and Zaviera Wolfe with support from Brandon Barr, Teen and Adult Programs Manager.

Teen Museum Studies is generously supported by The Strive Fund; The Dana Brown Charitable Foundation, US Bank, Trustee; Anonymous; Crawford Taylor Foundation; and the Mary Ranken Jordan and Ettie A. Jordan Charitable Foundation.



Related Events

Friday, September 9

Patron and Press Preview 10:00–11:30 am

Member Preview 5:00–6:00 pm

Public Opening 6:00–9:00 pm

For press access on September 9th, RSVP to Samantha Lyons, Communications Specialist, at slyons@camstl.org. Sukanya Mani and Brandon Barr, Teen and Adult Programs Manager, will be available at the Patron/Press Preview for interviews.

Saturday, September 24, noon

Sukanya Mani: Artist Talk

To schedule a Zoom or phone interview with the artist throughout the fall/winter exhibition season, please contact slyons@camstl.org.

About the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis

The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis creates meaningful engagement with the most relevant and innovative art being made today. Founded by civic and cultural leaders in 1980, the Museum transformed from a small gallery into an internationally recognized arts institution, now permanently housed in a flexible, open, and inviting building designed by renowned American architect Brad Cloepfil. CAM's distinct architecture reflects the organization's values and supports a dynamic range of exhibitions, public programs, educational initiatives, and community collaborations. The only museum in the region solely dedicated to contemporary art, CAM is one of the preeminent non-collecting institutions of its kind in the United States. We are a site for discovery, a welcoming space, free and open to all. For more information, visit camstl.org.

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